UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION II

DATE: OCT 11 1990

SUBJECT: Referrals of the Franklin Plastics Corp. Site (NJD 011121589) and the Elizabeth Coal Gas Site #2 (NJD 981082902)

FROM: Roland B. Hemmett, Acting Chief RB Hemmett
Surveillance and Monitoring Branch

TO:
Vince Pitruzzello, Chief
Program Support Branch

On October 10, 1990, FIT 2 (NUS Corp.) submitted two Site Inspection reports for the Franklin Plastics Corp. site located at 113 Passaic Ave., in Kearny, NJ and the Elizabeth Coal Gas Site #2, located at 406 South St., in Elizabeth, NJ. Site maps specifying the exact locations are attached. The resulting reports will be forwarded to your branch under separate cover when they are finalized. Both sites are located in industrial urban areas where neither groundwater nor surface water are used as drinking water sources. Nevertheless, at both sites, high concentrations of various contaminants in on-site soils pose a significant risk of direct contact. Upon our initial review, it appears that both of these sites are excellent candidates for removal assessments, as explained below.

First, at Franklin Plastics data resulting from both the NUS site inspection and an ongoing ECRA investigation show very high levels of semi-volatile organics and metals, among other parameters. For example in on-site soils, Bis (2-ethylhexyl) phthalate was detected at 26,000,000 ppb, Butylbenzl phthalate was detected at 16,000,000 ppb, and lead was detected at 2,520 ppm E (estimated). I have attached four data tables from the report which depict the wide range of contamination. Contaminant concentrations in the soil are so high that nearby residents could be at risk by both the direct contact and air routes. Another point of interest is that this facility is currently active (as a "compounder" of PVC pellets) and employees are potentially subject to risks beyond the limits set by OSHA; therefore, OSHA should be notified.

In contrast, the Elizabeth Coal Gas Site #2 is an inactive former coal gasification plant. Samples collected by NUS as part of the inspection revealed high concentrations of contaminants attributable to coal gas manufacturing wastes. For example, 2-Methylnaphthalene was detected at a level of 3,300,000 E ppb, Benzene was detected at 82,000 E ppb, and chromium was detected at 489 ppm. Pertinent data tables are attached. One of the more troubling aspects of this site is that it encompasses a baseball diamond used by neighborhood children. Action, to at least minimize access to the site, seems appropriate.

For both of these sites, utilization of FASP equipment could provide analytical services which could meet the central objective for these sites: to determine the extent of soil contamination, allowing for an adequate removal.

The indicator contaminants for both sites are semi-volatiles and metals, which could be analyzed by the XRF and TCMS, respectively. Also the FTIR could possibly used at the Franklin Plastics site to check for a release of volatile contaminants to the air.

Please contact Kate Donnelly of my staff at FTS 340-6704 if we can be of any further assistance. She can provide additional copies of the report upon request.

Attachments

cc: K. Donnelly, ESD w/o attachment
A. Brochu, ESD w/o attachment
P. Boone, ESD w/attachment
R. Salkie, ERRD w/attachment
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